

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

by Beth Ann Boyle

Dear Members

First of all I would like to wish you all a relaxing summer. After a school year dedicated to serving your students' learning, it's time to unwind and take a well-deserved break from your commitment. So enjoy!

Secondly I am thrilled to be able to give you a bit more information about the upcoming convention in November. The themes this 14th & 15th of November will be of particular relevance to teachers concerned with fostering quality education.

Deena Boraie, Phil Dexter, and **Scott Thornbury** will be our three international keynote speakers. Their participation has been made possible through the generosity of the following sponsors: [TESOL International Association](#), [the British Council](#), and [the New School](#) in New York. Dr. Boraie's keynote, entitled 'Teacher Professional Learning Communities: Myths and Realities', will focus on ways to build teacher development communities. Phil Dexter's keynote, entitled 'Ten Top Tips – Mainstreaming and' (continued on p. 7)



Food for thought From TESOL publications

Summer Thought
by Franca Ricci Stephenson

Several hints to reflect on and develop can be found in the latest issue of TESOL Journal¹ which might stimulate our thought as they touch on some critical points of our teaching profession.

A helpful suggestion comes from the article "*Gesture as a Private Form of Communication During Lessons in an ESL-Designated Elementary Classroom: A Sociocultural Perspective*"², interesting and most enjoyable to all those teachers who, like me, have often resorted to gesture with both young and adult learners. The authors carried out research studies in an elementary classroom of all English language learners on the use of forms of gesture without speech for private communication. They explain how gesture without speech developed as a system of communication under conditions when speech cannot be used for environmental reasons as, for instance, when a great deal of noise is present. They then explain how gesture without speech is an aspect of classroom communication as, for example, the raising of the hand by students to speak and the indexing of a particular student to speak through the teacher pointing at the student.

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They analyzed teacher gestures and student gestures, explored a gestural mode of communication without speech, used when speech was considered disruptive to concurrent verbal discourse. The conclusion of this study indicates that "*meaning-making, perhaps particularly for ELLs in elementary classroom contexts, involves far more than just what gets said. Students actuating new communicative affordances, which*

(continued on p. 4)

¹TESOL Journal. Volume 5, Issue 2, June 2014

² Steven G. McCafferty, Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Alessandro Rosborough, assistant professor, McKay School of Education, Brigham Young University

TESOL Italy Newsletter è un bollettino informativo a circolazione interna dell'associazione TESOL Italy. Non è in vendita, ma viene distribuito gratuitamente ai membri dell'associazione.

Supplemento a Perspectives, Spring-Fall 2010

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TESOL Italy membership dues for the year 2014:

- 1) ordinary members: • 25,00;
- 2) students under 30:• 15,00;
- 3) supportes, schools, universities, agencies:• 60,00

(including subscription to EnglishTeaching Forum).

Subscription to English Teaching Forum (4 yearly issues):• 15,00.

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TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Italy

TESOL Italy, an affiliate of TESOL International, founded by Mary Finocchiaro, is a non-profit organization of teachers of English in Italy. Its purposes are to stimulate professional development, to disseminate information about research, books and other materials related to English, and strengthen instruction and research.

TESOL Italy organizes a national convention every year .

Members receive TESOL Italy Newsletter and Perspectives, the academic journal of the association.

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TESOL Italy's mission is to develop the expertise of those involved in teaching English to speakers of other languages, and to foster professional growth and active participation in language teaching. Its mission includes promoting community understanding of the role of language in a progressively changing environment while respecting individuals' language rights.

- To achieve this TESOL Italy
- encourages access to and standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, continuing education and student programs;
 - links groups to enhance communication among language specialists;
 - produces high quality programs, services and products
 - promotes advocacy to further the profession.



From the editor

A fortunate stroke of 'serendipity'

Daniela Cuccurullo

The articles in this issue show a range of different interpretations of what our teaching profession implies. "Several hints to reflect on and develop" are in Franca Stephenson's column. The suggestions from the articles of TESOL Journal cover a variety of topics, but they all mostly refer to, or imply, two important dimensions of the teaching-learning process, learner centeredness in teaching and the need to share knowledge and experience with colleagues.

In Annarosa Iraldo's *Observations*, we find, as well as an introduction to the concept of 'serendipity', a witty analysis of *the way they learned*, which opens a new window on "the steps made in the course of decades in classroom observation". Some more

challenges and stimuli come from Morbiducci's *Translation in Love* as she clarifies "some of the gendered issues connected to translation studies".

Meanwhile two new groups have been formed in Molise and Val dell'Adige and are already active. TESOL Italy welcomes the new groups and their coordinators.

Further food for thought and action will be given by the many presenters at the TESOL Italy Convention in November, when we hope you'll have your "fortunate stroke of serendipity".

It is in the hope of continuing this active exchange of ideas and experiences next September that I wish all TESOLers a serene and restful summer vacation.

Enjoy your reading.



Translation in Love

Re-belles et fidèles

by Marina Morbiducci



“I still manage to surprise a few scholars from other fields when they hear that there is such a thing as research of gender issues within the field of translation studies. It may seem as such a narrow niche – but only deceivingly so. It is language, linguistics, pragmatics, culture, history, literature, anthropology, gender metaphors, communication, interpreting, cultural politics, social studies and politics, psychology and I can go on and on”: such are the inspiring incipital words from Miriam Margala’s compelling paper titled: “Translatress, Translator, Translation” (<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0bd8d5x2>).

Among other propositions, Margala argues that a look back at history can be beneficial in order to clarify some of the gendered issues connected to translation studies, both in theory and practice, at present times. More precisely, she envisages the starting point of a series of translational prejudices and dilemmas in the famous – or infamous, if you wish – expression coined as early as 1645 by Gilles Menage: “les belles infidèles”, where the two contrasting qualities of “beauty” and “infidelity” – inveterately attributed to women – are also referred to translations, or better, translated texts. Apparently there seems to exist an intimate link between women and translations (in their both being ancillary, dominated, and even undervalued). If this is true, two possible scenarios open up: one is well identified by Sherry Simon when she suggests in her *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (Routledge, 1996) that women and translations share the same secondary position in society and culture; the other is the conviction that women must somehow recover their pole position moving from the status of passive recipients of a male dominated discourse – as it has been in the past for long years – in order to become

forefront active agents of a constructive (even linguistic) protagonism experienced in first person.

Even in translational matters, if we try to deconstruct the commonplace that beauty and fidelity cannot coexist, we probably move to a more profitable ground than the one which simply asserts a static parallelism between the source text and the target text. Moreover, according to Sherry Simon, in any translational intervention, it is notably more interesting to follow the process than just grab the product. If we discard the deviant bipolar mechanism of conceiving a translated text as second hand product, in a sort of gregarious stance compared to the original text – a kind of relationship that, as above, Sherry Simon argues is mirrored in society in the male vs female universe – we can probably dis sever the suffocating bonds which require of a translation be “faithful”.

Once again, quoting from Margala: “To this day, fidelity in translation is a hotly debated issue. It struck me as rather odd when a professor at a conference where I presented a paper on translation and gender asked me whether I did not think that fidelity is a virtue and should be promoted rather than contested. This was one of those moments when I realized how pervasive the gendered language in translation studies had become. It is not the virtue of fidelity that feminist translation scholars want to contest. It is the mode of the discourse, the context in which ‘fidelity’ is used; it is the very specific and narrow meaning of ‘fidelity’ extracted by those (males) who use gendered rhetoric” (p. 1).

Margala continues: “In academic discourse (past and present), translation process is likened to a marriage where fidelity is of utmost importance so that the offspring (i.e. the translation) is legitimate and

worthy”. “Whether or not fidelity is deemed an asset, the rhetoric and the metaphors of the discourse always involve gendered language suggesting power relations in the translation process, violence and misogynic inclinations.” (p. 3) “Unfortunately, the Western tradition of translation has been trapped in the logic and thinking based on the dichotomy of creating versus re-creating. Creating as in writing, authoring, fathering, i.e. a male, primary activity versus derivative, secondary, female activity of translating (understand non-creative activity). This, of course, reflects a struggle for power and authority omnipresent in the translation theory discourse.” (p. 4) “Translation as a process of interlinguistic and cultural transfer does not simply ‘mirror’ the original, but contributes to it. If we rethink the issue of evaluating translations (and translators) and their status within this framework, the endless comparison of translations with their original becomes pointless” (p. 5).

If the question is positioned as a binary opposition between creation/invention vs fidelity/reproduction, and the whole complex ground of texts in translation is reduced to the choking confinement of a mimetic approach, that is, when the notion of “copy of the original” rules over any other principle, we could well agree with Helen R. Lane when, in an interview by Ronald Christ, asserts:

“And as for the notion that a single, correct, monogamous relationship exists between an original text and its translation, that is of course absurd. To begin with, both works, original and translation, exist in time, tied to a particular “moment” of both the source language and the target language, and their relationship is therefore necessarily relative. “Single,” “correct,” “monogamous” all imply that meaning itself is something absolute and static, surely a naive view after what structural linguistics has taught us as a basic principle: all living languages, and hence meanings (not to mention the meaning of meaning), are in constant evolution”

(from “ The making of a translator”: An Interview Helen R. Lane by Ronald Christ http://translation.utdallas.edu/Interviews/HelenLaneTR_5.html).

Therefore, most welcome the presence of “rebels” and “infidèles” in the realm of textuality in translation.

Food for thought

by Franca Ricci Stephenson

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are part of the semiotic environment, use contextual configurations that help them integrate into the systems of interpretance that they share as members of the community”. The role that gesture plays in classrooms is most probably understudied but if taught to teachers, might usefully help to both manage and promote student comprehension dimension to their interaction in the classroom, helping to both manage and promote student comprehension.

Further hints for reflection come from the contribution by Doreen Ewert's³ *Content-learning tasks for Adult ESL learners: Promoting literacy for work or school*. The author examines the question of Content Based Instruction (CBI) in adult education. She integrates the traditional Adult ESL objectives of language and literacy development, the building of the four skills to learner collaboration, critical thinking, evaluation and communication skills. Though she refers to teachers of English as a second language working with adult learners facing difficult pathways to academic and/or economic success, her article may well apply to the Italian teachers of non-linguistic subjects who are undergoing training to acquire competencies in English. Content-based instruction, is, according to the author a feasible response to this situation. Content other than language, “making learners accountable for actually learning this content is often secondary to language skill development, if considered at all. However, learning the content naturally motivates deep processing of language and the use of higher order thinking skills, which are foundational for high levels of literacy”.

³University of San Francisco

The way they learned

by AnnaRosa Iraldo

Classroom observation and serendipity

Today we leave the “studiosi” of the Poliglotta to their summer holidays and consider a case of serendipity produced by an experience of classroom observation. Just a short story fit for a summer issue of the Newsletter

Some time ago I came across an old notebook all devoted to the “profilo psicologico of M.”. It was the product of a period of classroom observation carried out many years ago by two sixteen year old students of scuola magistrale; they were supposed to draw the “profilo psicologico of M., a second year pupil of a primary school, as a “ tirocinio” activity. No instructions on how to carry out the observation, no grids, no specific language, no definition of issues or behaviours to be observed and - I daresay- no, or very limited, knowledge of psychology. While reading the notebook, I tried to fit the emotional overall perceptions of the observers into objective definitions bearing in mind the classroom observation principle of objective description vs interpretation of behaviour.

Here are a few instances of the main topics randomly dealt with, but not identified, by the observers. The areas in bold are drawn and adapted from different observation grids.

Cooperation. ...*le sue compagne la ammirano, ma M. non si insuperbisce; è gentile con tutte, le aiuta quando ne hanno bisogno, si unisce a loro nel gioco partecipandovi con grande animazione e dimostrandosi, anche durante la ricreazione, pronta, intelligente e soprattutto generosa. Di solito è lei che anima il gruppo in cui si trova...*

Communication with others. *Ci parla della sua famiglia dimostrando grande affetto e ammirazione per la sua mamma alla quale vorrebbe che anche noi concedessimo la massima ammirazione....E' affezionata anche alla maestra...Nel suo cuore l'insegnante ha molta importanza e M. dimostra questo suo affetto con le azioni cercando di essere utile, sforzandosi di migliorare la sua condotta per farle piacere.*

Motivation. *M. è molto curiosa e rivela la sua curiosità in molte circostanze sia durante le lezioni*

sia nella vita di tutti i giorni come interessamento ai fatti degli altri... Il successo e la lode la stimolano a migliorarsi.

Ability to work independently. Use of time *Nel suo lavoro è molto rapida e anche molto precisa. È sempre la prima a terminare il compito*

Willingness to follow directions. *Dimostra vivo interesse, buona attenzione e spiccata intelligenza. E' bello vederla durante le ore di lezione quando la maestra spiega un nuovo argomento: dritta nel suo banco con le braccia conserte sembra dimenticarsi di tutto ciò che le sta intorno ... I suoi occhi vivaci si fanno più grandi.*

No need to underline the emotional tone of the description and the tendency to interpret behaviour, rather than describe it, not to mention the many references to private family situations that I left out and that would be censored today. My initial aim was to identify and show the steps made in the course of decades in classroom observation, comparing the present objective approach with M.'s portrait in the notebook... But I leave a deeper analysis to the readers (if any) of this column, because my involvement in the notebook has unexpectedly been affected by a quite pleasant event: last week in one of my rare visits to my hometown I met M. thanks to my old school-mate who had just chanced to meet her on some recent occasion. To our mutual surprise we found out we were both teachers of English and had shared lots of experiences without ever meeting. M. read the notebook and was deeply moved and said she recognised herself in important aspects of her childhood. That's why my approach to the old notebook is not objectively reliable! .

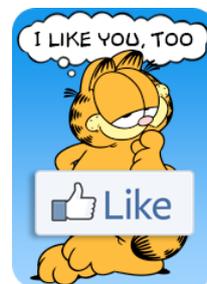
Just in case: Serendipity is the “occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way”: (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>).

Enjoy your holidays.



Web Watch

by Esterina La Torre



If you follow this page, you have probably noticed that I am in favour of activities that stimulate students' creativity and create opportunities for them to speak. In this occasion I want to spend some time presenting examples of how students can create comic strips and in which way they can help generate discussions in class. Thanks to comics there are lots of activities that can be used in class for various purposes, from some that simply add humor to your lessons to those that lead the students to discover critical information. Comic strips are usually defined as reading materials accompanied by visuals; they communicate using two major media: words and images and they have a great impact on students, thus creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Of course they can be used effectively to build reading skills, writing skills and promoting higher level thinking. On the web there are lots of sites devoted to comics as well as comic creators and software.

My favourite site contains "My Langwich Scool" cartoon strips by Jon Marks which I first saw in *English Teaching Professional* magazine. The website contains a selection of strips arranged by theme. I love them. They are really funny, especially those in the section dedicated to teachers, and they help us to smile and reflect: <http://www.langwichscool.com/2teachers.html>

But now let's go and see how our students can create and use comics. The best way to start is reading Bill Zimmerman's guide: http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/How-to-Play/Educators/21_Things.PDF

Soon after we can decide which site to use, and put into practice one or more suggestions:

http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/	There is also an iPad version of this tool, students can use their imagination to create stories with this easy-to-use comic strip generator.
http://garfield.com/game/comic-creator http://www.professorgarfield.org/parents_teachers/home.html	The first is a comic generator and the protagonist is a well known character "Garfield", but the second link is an entire site devoted to activities and games.
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/comic/	A simple and effective way to create comics with a step by step guide and the guarantee of an educational site.
http://www.toondoo.com/	Toondoo is free for individuals, it lets students create comic strips and cartoons easily with just a few clicks, drags and drops.
http://www.writecomics.com/	WriteComics is free to use and does not require to sign in, you must copy the link it provides once you have created your comic, you can start with a single panel.
http://cpbherofactory.com/	This is a site in which you can design your own superhero. We know how students love superheroes and this tool offers the right occasion to create a personal superhero.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

by Beth Ann Boyle

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and Embedding Inclusion as Good Teaching and Learning Practice', will celebrate diversity while it looks at ways to support collaboration and develop expertise. Scott Thornbury's keynote address, entitled 'New Competencies; Old Problems', will examine how language learning can be aided by technology.

The same keynote speakers will also be holding workshops as well as participating in a panel facilitated by Lucilla Lopriore entitled: 'CLIL Language Education: Perspectives for Language & Content Learning'. In addition to the keynote sessions, there will be 50+ concurrent sessions that will explore the three convention themes and will be organised into practical streams.

This year's convention will be of relevance once again for non-linguistic subject teachers as well as for English language teachers. Having such a diversified audience under one roof will offer many opportunities to share knowledge and experience . . . so invite your colleagues. Please also check our website periodically for convention updates.

PERSPECTIVES

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TESOL Italy: www.tesolitaly.org

Welcome to the new TESOL Italy Local Groups: Molise and Val dell'Adige

By Maria Grazia Maglione



In the last Executive Committee meeting held in June, the creation of two new Local Groups was finalised. The newbie groups are located respectively in Molise and Val dell'Adige (an area which includes the provinces of Bolzano, Trento and Verona). This is great news for our association which counts now fourteen LGs and can extend its activities in several Italian regions. The new groups will be coordinated by two young energetic and enthusiastic teachers, Laura Tommaso and Michael Joseph Ennis who had the idea to start this challenging 'TESOLing adventure'. We met both of them first at the last National Convention in November and more recently at the National Committee meeting last April. In particular, on this last occasion we had the opportunity to share some of their enthusiasm for getting involved in TESOL Italy Local Groups community as well as to discuss about ideas and plans for the next future.

We wish the two coordinators and the founding members of Molise and Val dell'Adige Local Groups a warm welcome. We do hope they can support actively our association.

TESOL Italy groups

REQUISITI PER IL RICONOSCIMENTO



Si raccomanda a tutti i colleghi impegnati o che intendono impegnarsi nella costituzione di un gruppo provinciale TESOL Italy di inviare all'Executive Committee la seguente documentazione:

1. Elenco nominativo degli iscritti (minimo cinque), con allegata fotocopia della ricevuta del relativo versamento sul c/c postale n. 15774003 intestato ad Associazione TESOL Italy, Via Boncompagni 2, 00187 ROMA.
2. Verbale dell'assemblea costitutiva del gruppo da cui risultino l'elezione e il nome di un Coordinatore.
3. Programma delle attività che il gruppo intende svolgere nel corso dell'anno scolastico.
4. L'Executive Committee, preso atto della documentazione prodotta dal gruppo, si riunisce per deliberarne il riconoscimento ed invia successivamente il testo della delibera al Coordinatore.

Il Coordinatore del gruppo TESOL Italy rappresenta a tutti gli effetti l'Associazione nell'ambito della provincia in cui il gruppo svolge la sua attività ed è tenuto a presentare una relazione annuale in sede di National Committee.

I membri del Consiglio di Presidenza e la Segreteria di TESOL Italy sono a disposizione per qualsiasi eventuale richiesta di ulteriori informazioni.

La collega incaricata dall'Executive Committee del coordinamento nazionale dei gruppi è Maria Grazia Maglione (e-mail: grazia.maglione@gmail.com).

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A glimpse at TESOL Italy's 39th National Convention's Schedule

Friday's schedule

Deena Boraie's and Phil Dexter's Keynote Speeches
Scott Thornbury's workshop

Saturday's schedule

Scott Thornbury's keynote speech
Deena Boraie's and Phil Dexter's workshops Panel on CLIL

To contributors

Please send your contribution in
Times New Roman 12

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The deadline for submitting articles for the
2014

September-October issue is August 30th

TESOL Italy's 39th Annual National Convention 2014

14-15 November

Learning Communities



The subthemes are:

Content and Language: Perspectives and Practice

Fostering Inclusive Education

Competencies for New Generations

**Talks—Workshops—Poster
Sessions –Book and Software Exhibit
Sirio di Giuliomaria Award
Raffle**